

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 2550
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Higher Education
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Interested parties contend that school districts and institutions of higher education should strengthen their partnerships in an effort to raise awareness and improve participation rates in higher education. H.B. 2550 seeks to advance that effort by consolidating the Higher Education Enrollment Assistance Program and the Higher Education Assistance Plan into one plan and by transferring certain enrollment assistance duties to institutions of higher education, with the intention of encouraging participation in higher education and providing students with tools necessary to overcome the barriers they face with regard to higher education.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in SECTION 1 of this bill.

ANALYSIS

H.B. 2550 amends the Education Code to require the institution of higher education in closest geographic proximity to a public high school in Texas identified by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board as substantially below the state average in the number of graduates who enroll in higher education institutions to enter into an agreement with that high school to develop a plan to increase the number of students from that high school enrolling in higher education institutions. The bill requires the institution, under the plan, to actively engage with local school districts to provide access to rigorous, high-quality dual credit opportunities for qualified high school students as needed and to collaborate with the high school to provide to prospective students information related to enrollment in an institution of higher education or a private or independent institution of higher education, assist students in completing applications and testing related to enrollment in those institutions, and target efforts to increase the number of Hispanic students and African American male students enrolled in higher education institutions. The bill requires an institution of higher education to include the plan and its results in the institution's annual report to the coordinating board on participation in higher education. The bill requires the coordinating board to include in its annual "Closing the Gaps" higher education plan progress report a summary of the results of the plans developed and administered under the bill's provisions. The bill authorizes the coordinating board to adopt rules to implement the higher education assistance plans.

H.B. 2550 repeals a provision requiring the coordinating board to develop a higher education assistance plan under which each public high school in Texas that is substantially below the state average in the number of graduates who attend public or private or independent institutions of higher education is required to provide to prospective students information related to enrollment in public or private or independent institutions of higher education, including admissions and financial aid information, to assist those prospective students in completing applications related to enrollment in those institutions. The bill repeals a provision requiring the coordinating board to administer the Higher Education Enrollment Assistance Program under which the

coordinating board is required to provide information related to enrollment in public or private or independent institutions of higher education to prospective students in areas of Texas identified by the coordinating board as having a significant number of students who graduate from high school and do not attend an institution of higher education and to assist those prospective students in completing applications related to enrollment in those institutions.

H.B. 2550 repeals Sections 61.07622 and 61.088, Education Code.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2013.